



LASAFE

Los Angeles County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

Motorist Aid

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To: 511 Partner Agencies

From: LA SAFE

Date: November 4, 2009

Re: 511 Phone System User Testing

Objective:

511 phone system user testing will ensure that the phone system has been developed per the intended design, help pinpoint any “bugs” that need to be addressed prior to Go-Live and give 511 partners an opportunity to comment on the phone system functionality, content and design. User testing of the pre-production MATIS system is in addition to the testing outlined in the Baseline System Acceptance Test Plan (BSD-2). The combined results will help the 511 team, including our partners, determine if 511 is ready for full system acceptance.

User Testing and Feedback Period:

User testing of the 511 IVR will begin on Wednesday, November 4 and continue through Friday, November 13 with comments due by COB Friday, November 13. While comments are due by November 13, the 511 IVR will continue to be tested beyond the SAT period and we’ll therefore appreciate comments any time beyond the SAT test period. However, comments received after the SAT test period will be addressed during the Operations and Maintenance period unless bugs are identified in which case immediate action will be initiated.

Instructions:

1. Read the “About 511 on the Phone” information listed below. This will give you an idea of how the phone system was designed and developed.
2. Call the 511 test phone number at: 877.427.8733
3. Follow the simple instructions to get the information you want. For example, for up to the minute traffic information, simply say “traffic” and follow the instructions.
4. In addition, you can try the following “Sample Tasks”. They should be fairly easy to complete
 - Call the test phone number to find out the current traffic conditions for your commute to work.
 - You have never ridden a bus before, but are interested in knowing what public transit agencies serve your area. Call the test phone number to get public transportation information near your home.
 - You are driving on the 101 and want to know about the traffic conditions near Ventura Boulevard. Call the test phone number to learn about traffic in this area.
 - You are tired of driving to work alone every day, and want to find a carpool partner. Call 511 to get matched with a carpool partner that has a similar commute to yours.

5. When you're done, say "**FEEDBACK**". Here you can leave a message about your experience calling 511, and suggestions for improvement. Please remember to leave your name, phone number and any specific problems you had using the system.
6. You can also email your comments directly to Anne Karna at karnaa@metro.net or to Mauro Arteaga at arteagam@metro.net

About 511 on the Phone

Using 511

511 is easy to use because it's fully voice activated; you don't need to punch numbers on the phone to get the information you need. Follow these simple steps:

1. Call the 511 test phone number
2. Say what you want: "Traffic" "Public Transit" or "Commute Services"
To get the info faster, be more specific. You can say something like:
 - "Traffic on the 405",
 - "Metrolink" or
 - "Find a carpool partner".
3. 511 will give you the information you need or will transfer you to someone who can help

Quick Tips

- Use shortcuts
 - If you already know what you want, just say it. Also, you don't need to wait for 511 to finish the question; you can interrupt and 511 will still understand you.
- Speak loud and clear
 - 511 will understand you better if you speak loudly and clearly.
- Try touch tones

511 will have a hard time understanding you if there's too much noise in the background. Having trouble? Press *8 to use your touchtone keypad at anytime.

Global Commands

You can say any of the following words at any point in your phone session:

- "Main Menu" – Callers will be sent to the Main Menu.
- "Repeat" – Callers will hear the last phrases said
- "Help" – Callers will hear the help options for the topic they are asking about
- "Goodbye" – Call be be ended.
- "Feedback" Callers can record comments about the system
- "Go Back" – Callers will be taken back to the previous state.
- "Start Over" – caller will be taken back to the top of the menu originally asked for

Additional User Tips

Using 511 requires that the caller listens closely to the prompts. The application is designed to only recognize a pre-defined set of caller inputs. Be as brief as possible with your responses.

As an example, if 511 asks for a direction, it is only expecting one of four responses; north, south, east or west. The application will NOT recognize phrases like “towards the airport” or “away from the coliseum.”

Test specific scenarios at any given time. If you want to get traffic information, then place a call to get traffic information. If you hear unexpected information or experience trouble obtaining the necessary information, hang up and dial again. Request the same information using the same set of inputs. If you encounter the same problem, report it to LA SAFE.

Basic Technology and Terminology

Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR): Automatic Speech Recognition converts spoken words to machine-readable input.

Interactive Voice Response (IVR): IVR is an interactive technology that allows a computer to detect voice and keypad inputs.

Dual Tone Multi-Frequency (DTMF): DTMF refers to the keypad on a phone. Each number corresponds to three or more letters of the alphabet. When a number is pressed on the keypad, the telephone sends a DTMF tone to 511.

Touch Tone: Another name for DTMF.

Barge-in: Barge-in is the ability of the system to recognize that a caller is speaking while a prompt is still playing, and to stop playing the prompt. Barge-in enables faster service for experienced callers who can interrupt prompts and quickly go through the dialog.

Text to Speech (TTS): TTS is a type of speech synthesis application that is used to create a spoken sound version of the text in a computer document.

Floodgates: Floodgates are special messages that can be played in 511 to alert callers to extraordinary circumstances as they travel in Southern California. These messages are recorded by 511 administrators. They may be audio recordings or text to speech.

Items Still Under Development:

Transit Trip Planner: This feature will soon be available for testing and provide bus and rail itineraries for Los Angeles and Orange County

Transit Schedules (NexTrip): This feature will soon be available for testing and provide transit schedules for Los Angeles and Orange County

Text to Speech: Occasionally the data or phrase that needs to be read back to the caller has not been recorded by the 511 voice talent. In this situation, you will hear the data/phrase read back in Text to Speech. Please note and forward to LA SAFE and information read back to you in text to speech.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't 511 understand what I say?

511 is voice activated and sometimes picks up background noise. Background noise from radios, nearby

conversations, vehicles and street noise may interfere with the 511's ability to understand what you're saying.

If rolling up the windows, turning down the music or finding a quiet spot doesn't help, a better option is to use your touch-tone keypad. Simply press *8 at anytime to switch from voice to touch-tone keypad

How can I get the information that I want, faster?

An easy way to get the information is to say what you want without waiting for 511 to complete the questions. In other words, you can interrupt 511 while it's asking a question. For example, as soon as 511 asks: "What can I help with," you can say "traffic on the four oh five" without waiting to hear the entire question.

Another way of getting information faster is to use shortcuts. Shortcuts are specific words that can be said at the Main Menu to take you directly to the feature you want. Please refer to the next question, What specific words can I say to get the information I want, faster to learn more about shortcuts you can use.

You can also say the following at anytime during your call for faster navigation:

- "Main Menu" takes you directly back to the Main Menu
- "Repeat" tells you the information again
- "Start Over" takes you to the top level menu of the current state
- "Go Back" to return to a previous menu

What specific words can I say to get the information I want, faster?

You can say any of the following specific words and go directly to that area of 511:

- For Traffic Information:
 - Say: "Traffic on [Highway/Freeway] [direction]": This takes you directly to the Traffic and Travel Time reports for the specified freeway. Example: say "Traffic on the 710 south" or "Traffic on the 60 east"
- For Public Transit Information:
 - Say: "Agency Name" This transfers your call to the transit agency you'd like to talk to. Example: say "Metrolink" or "OCTA"
- For Commute Services information:
 - Saying a specific service will transfer you to someone who can help. Example: say "Carpool", "Vanpool", or "Park and Ride lots"

How can I get help when I call 511?

You can get help in 511 by saying "Help" at any time during your call to hear options for the current menu. You can also press the star (*) key on your touch tone keypad to get help.

How do I give my feedback on the 511 service?

You can provide feedback by saying "Feedback" or pressing "*3" (Star 3) from the touch-tone keypad at any time during your call, and 511 will prompt you to leave a recorded message.

Traffic FAQ

What kind of traffic information will 511 give me when I call?

511 will give you on-demand traffic information specific to your route. 511 gives up to date information on traffic speeds, travel times and incidents such as road construction, lane closures and accidents on

interstate highways and state routes in Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Ventura Counties.

Tell 511 a roadway name, direction and exit. 511 will tell you the following for that area:

- Traffic Speed: 511 will tell you the average traffic speed on the freeway area you ask about.
- Incidents: 511 will tell you if there is an accident, road closure or any other event that might delay traffic.
- Travel Time Information: 511 will tell you the travel time between the area you asked about and the next three freeway interchanges.

How can I get the traffic information I want on the phone?

When you call 511, you will be asked if you want information on traffic, public transit or commuter services. To get traffic information, follow these simple steps:

1. At the Main Menu, say "Traffic" or Press 1.
2. 511 will ask you "Where do you want traffic info for?" Say a freeway or state route number.
3. 511 will ask you the direction you're traveling. Say north, south, east or west.
4. 511 will ask you to "Tell me an exit". Say an exit name or exit number.

Once 511 knows what freeway, direction and exit you want traffic information for, 511 will read you the traffic report for that area.

To get the information faster, simply say the freeway name, direction and exit name in one sentence at the Main Menu. For example, you can say "Traffic on the 405 north at Wilshire Boulevard" instead of saying each piece of information separately.

Are there easy shortcuts for getting traffic information faster?

Yes. Instead of waiting for 511 to ask you each individual question about your freeway, direction and exit, you can simply say everything in one sentence at the Main Menu. For example, you can say "Traffic on the 405 north at Wilshire Boulevard" instead of saying each piece of information separately.

Can I ask about multiple freeways in a single call?

Yes, you can ask about traffic on multiple freeways in a single call. Once 511 has read out the information on the first freeway, you can go back to the Traffic Menu and request for information on another freeway. Another option is to say "Main Menu" and then say the name of the freeway. In case you don't want to hear the complete traffic information for the freeway you requested initially, you can say "Start Over" (or Press *7 from your touch-tone keypad) to go back to the Traffic menu and request for information for another freeway.

Does 511 have traffic information for specific areas or traffic hotspots?

Yes, 511 will give you traffic information for heavily traveled areas, called traffic hotspots. You can hear traffic reports for hotspots by saying "Traffic" and then saying the traffic hotspot name in the Traffic Menu. Traffic hotspots include: Downtown Los Angeles, the El Toro Y, the Orange Crush, LAX, the Sepulveda Pass and more.

Why can't 511 give me the exact travel time for my entire trip?

511 will give you the travel time between the area you asked about and the next four consecutive freeway interchanges. 511 currently gives segmented travel times from one freeway interchange to another freeway interchange. You can get travel times for your entire trip by listening to the travel times along each of the segments you're traveling on. In the future, 511 will give you the entire travel time from the start to the end of your trip.

Can 511 give me a list a freeways that serve my area?

To hear the list of freeways that serve a particular area, simply say "Traffic" in the Main Menu and then say "Freeway List". You can also use your phone's touch-tone keypad and dial 777. 511 will ask you what city you need a freeway list for, and will list the freeways in or near that particular city.

Transit FAQ

What features are currently available in the Transit Menu?

Currently, you can call 511 to get transferred to the transit agency of your choice. You can also get a list of agencies that serve any city in Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Ventura Counties. By January 15th, 2010, a user will be able to ask to plan a trip on transit and get bus schedules when calling 511.

Commuter Services FAQ

What is Commuter Services?

Commuter Services can help you find a better route to work by providing Rideshare Services (finding a carpool, vanpool or Park & Ride lot and learning about employer programs) and Bicycling Information . Simply say what you want, and 511 will help you or transfer you to an agent that will give you the information you need.

Rideshare

Saying "Rideshare" will transfer you to an agent that can help you with the following:

- Carpool and Vanpool matching (say "carpool" or "vanpool")
- Guaranteed Ride Home information (say "guaranteed ride home")
- Finding a Park&Ride lot (say "park and ride")
- Employer Rideshare Programs (say "employer programs")

Since Rideshare information is based on the city you work in, 511 will ask you "What area do you work in?". Say the city you work in and 511 will transfer you to an agent that will provide you with Rideshare Services you're requesting.

Bicycle

You can say "bicycle" to reach the bicycle section. After you say the city name when 511 asks "Which city do you want bicycle information for?", 511 transfers you to the bicycle agency of that particular city. If you already know the name of the bicycle agency, just say it and 511 will transfer your call directly to that agency.

How can 511 help me find a carpool or vanpool?

Call 511 and say "Carpool" or "Vanpool" at the Main Menu. Since carpool and vanpool matching is based on the city you work in, 511 will ask you "What area do you work in?". Say the city you work in and 511 will transfer you to an agent that will help you find a carpool partner or vanpool program in your area.

How can I quickly get transferred to an agent that can match me with a carpool or vanpool partner?

To get transferred quickly, say the name of the County you work in followed by "Rideshare" at the Main Menu. For example, if you work in Orange County, simply say "Orange County Rideshare" and 511 will transfer you to an agent that will help you find a carpool partner or vanpool program in your area.

How can I find information about Park & Ride lots?

Say "Park and Ride" at the Main Menu. Since Park & Ride lot information is based on the city you work in, 511 will ask you "What area do you work in?" Say the city you work in and 511 will transfer you to an agent that will help you find a Park & Ride lot.

Can 511 help me find bicycle maps for Southern California?

Yes. 511 can transfer you to the Bicycle agency that can provide you with the bicycle maps. At the Main Menu, say "bicycle" to reach the bicycle menu. After you say the city name when 511 asks "Which city do you want bicycle information for?", 511 transfers the call to the bicycle agency of that particular city. If you already know the name of the bicycle agency, just say it and 511 will transfer your call directly to that agency.